

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AGR-05 AGRE-00 L-03 H-02 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 FTC-01 /036 R

DRAFTED BY EB/OCA/CM:LKLIEFORTH:FBP

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R 211455Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 233784

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BBAK,IR

SUBJECT: COMPLAINT BY U.S. RICE EXPORTERS CONGRESSIONAL
INTEREST

1. THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ASKED BY SENATOR DALE BUMPERS
FOR ASSISTANCE IN RESOLVING MAJOR CLAIMS AND COMPLAINTS
OF ARKANSAS RICE EXPORTERS AGAINST THE GOI, WHICH HE
STRESSES "MAY INHIBIT FUTURE RICE SALES TO IRAN." ACCORDING
TO THE SENATOR, U.S. EXPORTERS COMPLAIN THAT IN PAST,
CONTRACTS SPECIFYING THAT THE IRANIANS WOULD PAY DEMURRAGE
CHARGES HAVE NOT BEEN UNIFORMLY HONORED. ONE MILLION
DOLLARS IN CLAIMS ARE OUTSTANDING. WITH RESPECT TO PRESENT
CONTRACT CONDITIONS, IRANIAN FOREIGN TRANSACTIONS COMPANY
(IFTC) IS SAID TO HAVE IMPOSED CONDITIONS DIFFICULT
FOR AMERICAN SUPPLIERS TO MEET. MOST "ONEROUS" OF THESE
IS GOI STIPULATION OF ITS RIGHT TO REJECT SHIPMENT AT ANY
TIME CONCERNED WITH REQUIREMENT THAT RICE BE SHIPPED IN
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HUNDRED KILOGRAM BAGS (FIFTY KILOGRAM BAGS ARE STANDARD)

AND A LIMIT OF FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS A DAY DEMURRAGE CHARGES
GOI WILL BE WILLING TO PAY. THIS SUM IS SAID TO BE
SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW CURRENT DEMURRAGE CHARGES.

COMMENT: DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ADVISED BY AGR/FAS THAT OUR
AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO RESOLVE ISSUES
RAISED BY THE SENATOR WITH IFTC MANAGEMENT. THERE HAS

BEEN REPORTEDLY LITTLE SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING A RESOLUTION
AT THAT LEVEL. FAS SUGGESTS THAT THE IMPORTANT QUESTION
OF PAYMENT OF THE PAST DUE DEMURRAGE CHARGES REQUIRES A
DEMARCHE AT A HIGHER LEVEL IN THE GOI, SUCH AS THE
MINISTER OF COMMERCE OR THE PRIME MINISTER. THE PROBLEM
SEEMS TO BE ONE OF INSUFFICIENT APPROPRIATIONS TO THE
IFTC.

2. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE FROM EMBASSY A
STATUS REPORT ON THE CASE AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROPRIATE
ADDITIONAL ACTION THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN. ROBINSON

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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